Aphra, the Illustrious Rouge Redstar, and Those Damn Cylinder Heads

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by lefemmerouge2

Summary

Chelli and her crew have been through a lot, whether meeting Steven Universe, a group of space pirates led by the willful Marika Kato, or coming across Korra, Asami, Lin, Tenzin, and others in Republic City. Tensions are growing, especially after what Chelli and Entrapta (known as Apta for short) overheard one recent night. This will all come out into the open after they meet an android woman named Rouge Redstar, helping her fight powerful war machines which shoot deadly lasers, causing fissures among the crew of the Darla Angel which cannot easily be mended, and changing all of their lives forever, especially those of Glimmer, Bow, Adora, and Catra.

Notes

I have been wanting to write a Metallic Rouge fic for a while now and this seemed like the perfect opportunity to do so. In this fic, I start using "Chelli" to refer to Aphra since Entrapta is the one who uses it and to keep it consistent with the other parts of this series. This fic is the culmination of the fissures which have been growing among the crew of the Darla Angel since at least parts 5 and 6. I hadn't originally planned to add in Willy Wonka and the Chocolate Factory, but I decided to do so because it helped end Rouge's story in a way that opens up a possible spinoff, if I decide to go that direction. As always, constructive criticism and comments are welcome!

Update: This fic has been crossposted on Squidge World, Quotev, Wattpad, adult-fanfiction, Inkstone, and asianfanfics.

Update on 5/21/26: I learned that Cyan's full name is "Cyan Bluestar" as stated by the official cast listing as reported by Anime News Network, so I updated the character name accordingly, while leaving it mentioned the same within the fic itself. The official anime website says this about her, when translated: "A mysterious young girl who claims to be Rouge's younger sister. She possesses a cool, detached personality. She transforms into a blue "Gladiator"—bearing a striking resemblance to Rouge's own form—and actively seeks to take Rouge's life. She is often heard humming the very same melody that Gene plays on the piano."

See the end of the work for more notes

- Inspired by Decadent by ragnarok89
- Inspired by By Her Side by AozoraAera
- Inspired by Chocolate by cozyreinsfw
- Inspired by Please Be Me, Red And Waiting For My Embrace by FreezingKaiju

"Who knew that fighting these damn Cylinder Heads would be *so much* fun!" Chelli shouted as she discharged her blaster left and right, with her flowing brown hair blowing in the wind. Entrapta, who went by the shortened name of "Apta," as Chelli often called her, happily stood by her side, fighting alongside her.

She *didn't care* whether people saw her girlfriend as a horrible person or not, despite her often reckless decisions, nor that Chelli cared about herself more than anyone else. She could be drawn to people like that. After all, she was the same person who once had a strong crush on Hordak, an extraterrestrial being who ruled an evil empire, and someone who was her sort-of research partner.

As such, Chelli connected to her on that level, even if Apta could, sometimes, get on her nerves. Somehow, Apta made her care about someone other than herself to an extent. It could be because she remembered that Apta *saved* her on Acoslight all that time ago and cared for her when she was injured. Or maybe it was the fact that she had fallen madly in love with every aspect of Apta's being. Or perhaps it was both?

This had all started one hour prior. They had, strangely enough, picked up a distress call from someone calling themselves 'Rouge Redstar.' The communication said:

> A woman is leading a legion of terrible war machines against us. She wants to take over the universe or something and go against humanity for their 'crimes.' Whatever. I don't care about that, not really. Anyway, all I *know* is that if we can't stop her, then I can't shoot her in the head.

She then provided the coordinates so that anyone could come to her aid. The last part intrigued Apta on a certain level. A person who wanted to shoot their enemy in the head? This sounded like *her kind* of woman! Many people would have been horrified by this, but not Apta or Chelli. Nope. Before anyone could say anything or came to a consensus on *how* to respond to this message, Chelli quickly plugged in the coordinates into the navigcomputer, and Apta followed her lead by pressing a button. The ship began traveling through the rocky plains of hyperspace.

The other crew members looked at Chelli and Apta, visibly angry. Almost all of them were furious about what had just happened. They blamed Chelli more for this than Apta, however. How could she put them in danger, *again*, without consulting them? She really was bad news. They were starting to get tired of her. If there had been another vote for captain of the *Darla Angel*, she likely wouldn't have won. Instead, Glimmer would probably have received at least three votes (Bow, Adora, and Catra), and Chelli would have garnered two votes (Emily and Apta). Even if Glimmer and Chelli could vote, Chelli would still be *one* vote short.

"Come on, *Captain* Aphra. What the hell did you do *this* time?"

In saying this, Glimmer acknowledged her as captain, even though she was displeased with her. Adora followed up. "Seriously? We hadn't even agreed on what we want to do!" Catra growled. Bow gave her an unfriendly look. Only one woman stood by her side: Apta.

Ameliorating their harsh views was one part of the plan she had concocted with Chelli, to make them feel more at ease. They had to do it. Having crew harmony was important.

"Don't be mad at Chelli! She's *always* doing her best...for all of us."

While her words made Chelli happy and overjoyed, as she expected her girlfriend would say something like this, the other crew members were not as pleased. Catra spoke up, almost uncharacteristically, ready to challenge her, this time. Adora firmly held her hand, showing that she supported her. Thanks to that, she could stand strong without being afraid.

"Why do you stay with her, Entrapta? We should just put her in an escape pod and *boot her* from this ship! You know she *only* cares about herself, right?"

Catra had a valid point. After all, the primary reason that Chelli had stayed around on the ship was *because* Apta had pushed for her to remain there. Chelli had also garnered support of Adora and Glimmer, the latter after she was conned into it. In fact, Apta had made it abundantly clear that if they pushed out Chelli, then she would leave as well. So, they acquiesced to her staying, for now. Catra's words were hurtful, making Apta more convinced to go through with the plan she had agreed to fulfill with Chelli's help. Apta has assisted Chelli in her successful effort to become the captain of the *Darla Angel* in a coup d'etat of sorts, on Earth.

Glimmer *hated* thinking about it now, but she had begrudgingly accepted Chelli as the captain. Even those grousing about her now, knew that she was, without a doubt, the most capable one, among the crew, at flying spaceships. So, that was one positive they had to acknowledge. They couldn't deny it. Apta replied to Catra's harsh words.

"I like Chelli. *A lot.* I'm sure you all can understand that. You are all with your partners here. Last night, we compared our beautiful tattoos when we, you know, played nug-a-nug in our bed, together. That's just who we are."

Adora didn't have any idea what this meant, nor did Catra, or even Glimmer. It was Bow that *knew* exactly what they were talking about. He stated it plainly. "They had sex. That's what she means."

Glimmer rolled her eyes. They were doing this *again,* really? How *many* times had it been already? It almost seemed like it was every night, now. She may have felt a little perturbed by it because the most she had ever done with Bow was cuddle. Chelli started boasting about what she had done the previous night, in her typical fashion.

"Oh, it was beautiful and amazing in more ways than one. We touched each other's tattoos all night long. I felt her exquisite tattoo on her back with my fingers and she sensually rubbed my arms with her hands and amazing hair. Then we continued strumming all night long. I never felt so alive."

Again, no one knew what this meant but Bow. Some time ago, his dads had acquired a small book entitled *31 Adorable Slang Terms*: *From Green Gowns to Hauling Ashes*, which his dads had kept in the family library as a joke. It was only ten pages long and he had read it by

accident one day. He wanted to scrub his mind of the words he saw, but he couldn't. They were always there as hard as he tried to stop thinking about them.

As they continued to chatter on, before they knew it, the *Darla Angel* has arrived in orbit above the planet where Rouge had sent her distress call. Apta guided the ship through the atmosphere. Suddenly there were explosions all around them. Their presence had been detected. Chelli ordered Apta to activate a feature which made the ship invisible. She did so, disguising it from the enemy. Now, they did not see the ship on their scopes.

When they started land, they saw one lone woman hunkered in place shooting her gun at huge, and imposing, robotic machines. While everyone else wanted to leave and not help the woman, at first, suddenly they changed their tune and said they would go along. It wasn't mind control persay but it was the effect of a device that Chelli and Apta had worked on, together, a while back. Named the memory-implanting machine, or MIM for short, it had worked wonders.

Soon thereafter, their spaceship landed and the crew disembarked. The woman didn't say much until Adora transformed into her She-Ra form, using her magical power to send the Cylinder Heads, a set of automated four-legged war machines outfitted with powerful laser cannons, back. Her actions caused the machines to temporarily retreat. The woman turned around and saw a motley crew in front of her. Her distress call had gone through, apparently.

"Finally someone came!…" Her internal voice, of her friend and lover-of-sorts, Naomi, who had merged into her, told her to be cautious. She ignored that. Her inner Rouge came out instead, overriding Naomi's suggestions to her chagrin.

"Do any of you have *wonderful*, tasty chocolate by chance?"

For some reason, Chelli did. She reached in her pocket and it was there. Somehow it hadn't been melted after everything they had gone through. She didn't understand *why* this woman wanted chocolate, but whatever. That didn't matter. This planet could be the perfect place to enact their plan, as long as they defeated these damn robots.

"Yes, Miss, I have the chocolate right *here*. It was given to us by some magical boy on Earth."

She snatched the chocolate out of Chelli's hand, quickly unwrapped it, and began chowing down, eating one piece at a time so that it really stuck with her. Her past association with chocolate was part of the reason she liked it so much. On the other hand, she also liked the taste, the texture, and how it made her feel.

This chocolate had a unique taste, unlike anything she had ever eaten in her life. It was *white chocolate*, not dark chocolate, or regular milk chocolate, and it had some almond flavoring. *How scrumptious!* She savored the taste. You could say she was clueless about the world, but Naomi helped her fill in the pieces.

Almost acting like her conscience, Naomi urged her to be more decisive and not trust these people. Rouge knew what she was saying. On the other hand, she believed that a person who gives you chocolate is *always* a friend. To calm Naomi down, she promised to do some

interior decorating with her later that day. While Naomi in the past would have been angry, she wasn't now. It was unclear how this "decorating" could even occur. Naomi was one with Rouge and that was okay. She saw it as her duty to help and protect Rouge whenever she could.

"Thank you, miss. Now let's kick their asses!" Rouge said forcefully, with Naomi grumbling that she would never say something in such a manner. Yelling the word "deform!" her body began to transform. A yellow halo glowed above her head and moved down her body, with her circuits shown, until it reached her feet. She had changed into her fighting form. Her body hardened, as wind swept across her body. The automated war machines recognized the change, as did their devious commander, Opera. They quickly turned around and faced them Rouge and newfound allies. It seemed they were outnumbered and outgunned. *How could they win?*

Each of Rouge's eyes had become electronic displays, her mouth had locked into her face, and her hair had turned into horns. She fired an energy blast from her arm, destroying one of these infernal machines. This time she was not alone, not just because Naomi was with her, but thanks to these new allies-of-sorts, who came in her time of need. Chelli pulled out her blaster from her holster. While she felt it might be worthless, Apta joined her, riding atop Emily. Not longer after, she told Emily to aim and release her energy burst. At the same moment, Chelli pulled the trigger on her gun. The legs of another machine were weakened, causing it to fall onto the one walking next to it, and so on, causing a cascade of destruction. Adora, Catra, Bow, and Glimmer cheered.

With that, we get back to the present, with Chelli and Apta fighting side by side. Adora, in her She-Ra form, blasted these monstrous machines while Catra clawed them apart. Bow and Glimmer did what they could to help, which wasn't much, because Glimmer's magic powers didn't work on the planet and Bow had a limited quantity of arrows. Rouge attacked these robots with more physicality than the rest of them, whether punching, kicking, and anything else, to take them down. The landscape became scarred from this intense fight. It seemed it would never end.

Opera cackled. Her black babydoll dress and dark lilac twin tails blew in the wind, as she held onto one of the machines with her black gloves. Her black platform boots were firmly cemented on the robot's upper surface and she pointed ahead, with a control in her hand. Her style was iconic, including ripped stockings and a left eye piece which somewhat resembled an opera mask, hence her name. Out of nowhere, she began singing.

Magic spell I cast and give you a sweet kiss

A spell, with one bite, that you aren't gonna miss

It's an invitation to my STAGE

You will be trapped inside my cage!

Despite the fact that many of her infernal machines were falling to the ground, left and right, she remained calm and collected. Rouge was making her way to her, so she could, as she put it, shoot her in the head. Opera was ready to battle. Her agility and strength only rivaled those

of other androids (Neans to be exact), like Rouge. She could fight either with her hands, by using her twin tails to whip opponents, or use them as extra arms if needed.

As Rouge sliced each one of the machines in front of her into pieces with her laser-cutters, built into her armor, Opera prepared herself. She was caught off guard by an energy blast from Emily. One went through the head of a nearby machine, obliterating it, causing it to topple to the ground. They were getting *too close* for comfort. She could tell that the machines around were falling, crumbling into nothing. How was this even possible? She couldn't pinpoint the location of the blasts, except to see that they were coming from the air. As this drew the machines' attention, and her own, she was surprised to see that Rouge was right in front of her.

One of her twin tails fell down. She couldn't easily regenerate them, so she staggered backwards, then regained control. She used her other twin tail to begin choking Rouge, holding her over the edge, almost to her death, as she struggled to breathe. She snickered and believed she would be victorious. There was no way they could win now, she thought. They would rue the day they had crossed her.

"Oh, my foolish Rouge, *you have lost*. I will be changing everything. This is *my* story to write. Watch me closely, as this will be your last moments alive."

As she continued to gasp for air, Rouge used her last ounce of strength to power up her laser sword, which she rammed right through the Opera's body. Her undamaged twin tail soon let go of Rouge and she immediately fell to the ground, while Rouge jumped onto the top of the robot, trying to recover as fast as she could. Before Opera could even think of what to do next, Rouge raised her arm-cannon to her head.

"See you in hell, *motherfucker*," she exclaimed and pulled the trigger. Opera's head exploded into a million pieces and her body slumped as it fell from the top of the robot to the ground below. As a puppet of sorts, she began to unravel into nothing, and floated away. Her army of war machines faltered after Rouge smashed Opera's control. The machines soon became aimless and easy to destroy. Adora used her strength to release one strong energy wave, obliterating many of the remaining war machines. The others were taken care of by Apta, Chelli, Bow, Glimmer, or Catra. *They had won*. Rouge deformed into her usual form and hugged them all, which Naomi had not expected.

Rouge began singing, unexpectedly, with everyone joining in. It was almost like a dream. They sung about the sun, moon, dancing wildly, the boundary between what as finite and what was infinite, traveling beyond limits, and igniting the challenge. In the midst of all of it, Apta brought an exhausted Rouge into the *Darla Angel*, with no one the wiser, after she placed a life-life hologram outside the ship which replicated her form, and placed a device outside the ship which released a special gas. It caused everyone, but Chelli, for whom she had given the antidote, and herself, to become a bit delirious.

Everything was about to change in a way that none of the other crew members would have ever guessed. Chelli and Apta knew what was coming next. They were prepared. This was all part of *their plan*. As the effects of the gas continued, Catra, Adora, Glimmer, and Bow prepared to get onto the ship where they could rest, hoping if they slept, they could return to full strength. Nothing seemed wrong. Chelli stopped them in their tracks. She growled.

"I know what you all think about me. Your damn niceties don't cover it up. You wanted to kick me off the ship and *you* made Apta cry. We heard what you all said to Korra and Asami. It's damn disgusting."

Glimmer was aghast. How was this even possible? Had she been spying on them? *What was going on?* "None of us meant any harm...we were just venting," she started to say, then Catra spoke up. She did not like how Chelli was treating them. She had to call her out. "You have to stop bullying us, *Aphra*. This isn't healthy…This isn't how you treat people."

Chelli could take no more of this. She continued to stand in their way. They would not be able to rest on the ship. They had been stopped. Chelli chuckled and shook her head. She snarled and said, at the top of her lungs, "Fine. If you don't want to be with me on the ship, then *so be it*."

Adora tried to counter her. "Captain, that's not what we are saying at all…" Her words were disregarded. Chelli shouted a command to Apta. "Do it!" She nodded. Emily happily complied. As a robot, she didn't have any feelings for them whatsoever. While Apta would have sympathized, she couldn't. Not this time. Their words had cut her deeply. They had questioned her judgment, claiming *they* knew better than her. She couldn't be around people like that. That was a red line for her. It was one of the many reasons she actually felt *more* at home in the oppressive Horde than the Princess Alliance, where the princesses did not treat her well.

Emily fired a massive stun blast. Adora, like everyone one else was woozy. Even so, she still attempted to transform into her She-Ra form in an effort to protect them. At the same time, Bow readied his arrows for combat. "For the honor of…" she said, then trailed off, as she her legs gave way. She hit the ground, with Catra holding her hand. Each of their bodies was hit with a massive blast of energy, causing them to lose control of their legs and arms. They felt like their bodies were being poked by *hundreds of needles*. It was excruciating. Bow was still conscious to some extent. He tried to calm tensions, so they could get out of the situation. He hoped to appeal to the sciencey princess *he thought* he knew.

"Entrapta, how can you do this? I thought we were *friends*."

She shook her head. It would take her a while to forgive him, *if she ever did*. "I'm sorry Bow, but you, Glimmer, Adora, and Catra really hurt me. I can't do this anymore. I hope you have a good rest of your life." As she said this, she began crying, with Chelli tightly holding her. Bow saw them walk into the ship, which blasted off from the surface, and he reached out, then his face hit the dirt. What was done was done. There was no turning back.

Once they were outside the planet's orbit, Chelli called another one of her former friends. Maybe she could help these wayward souls, as they could be called. She was showing that on some small level, she had a *little* compassion for them, if it could even be called that. The woman on the other end of the hologram grumbled. She wasn't happy to see her. She knew that if she was getting contacted by her, it wasn't good.

"Aphra, what the *fuck* do you want? I'm already cleaning up all the damn messes you created. I thought I told you to *never* contact me ever again."

Twirling her hair and trying to act flirtatious, Chelli laughed uneasily. She had to get her to do this. Who else could? "Sana, can you please help me? Can't you do it for someone you *still* love?"

She rolled her eyes. It was another one of these things again. *Ugh.* Chelli could be such a pushy person sometimes. Under it all, her feelings for Chelli were a tangled mess of complex emotions, filled with old and unhealed wounds.

"Fine. I'm listening."

Chelli didn't know how to explain this. How could she? She came up with an excuse.

"I...uh *found* some people on the planet Mars who wanted to join *your* plucky rebels in their silly alliance. I thought I'd let you know."

Sana was a bit suspicious. She began to say, "Sure, I'll check it out, just tell me…," then Chelli cut her off and transmitted the coordinates. "Thanks! I'll see you around, my *sweet* Sana!" Unsurprisingly, Sana was angry yet again. She slammed her fist down on the table. She wasn't sure what Chelli's real game plan was here but having more people to fight for the Alliance would be a *good thing*, right?

As a smuggler, she only worked with *those rebels* sometimes. They could throw her off, or not be as cutthroat, savvy, or efficient, as her. She had to often make her own way. And that was okay.

While Sana began traveling through the lanes of hyperspace to the planet Mars, Chelli whispered to Apta and suggested their next destination. She had gone there a long time ago. Apta nodded. It would be a nice place to lay low after all this messiness. At least that was the hope. Punching in the coordinates, she then pushed forward the lever (another way for the ship to travel through hyperspace apart from the button), and the ship sped through space.

Only a few seconds later, a small ship arrived in Mars's orbit. Sana began scanning the surface for lifeforms and found four individuals. Maybe Aphra *had* been right after all. She soon descended the ship onto the planet's surface, ready to retrieve these lifeforms. When she landed, she was terrified by what she found. The surface was scarred by a recent battle, with massive machines lying everywhere. Approaching cautiously with her gun drawn, she soon came upon Catra, Glimmer, Bow, and Adora. They were lying on the ground. Putting her hand on their wrists, she could tell they were still alive. Something had caused them to be unconscious. She had a feeling it *wasn't* the machines.

She considered dragging them all to her ship. That could also be dangerous because if they woke up, they could overwhelm her. So, she decided to do something else. She would wake them up instead, one by one. She started with *the man*, someone whose skin complexion was the same as hers. Perhaps he would be the best one to start with.

"Mister," she said, after slapping him hard on the face, "who are you, and *why* are you on Mars?" He looked up at her and tried to crawl back. Who was this woman? And why was she asking him questions? He tried to play it as cool as he could, under the circumstances, even as he remained out of it, still reeling from the Emily's energy blast. What else could he do?

"I'm Bow and I came here with my girlfriend, Glimmer...she's a former princess. Also, my good friend Adora and her girlfriend Catra are here."

Sana rolled her eyes. The names almost seemed too spot-on. She ventured a guess.

"So, I'm gonna say that you are good with bows and arrows, your girlfriend has some sort of magical powers, Adora is adorab-le, and Catra is a cat, right?…"

Bow was aghast. How could she know all of that? They had just met! *Could she read minds?* He tried to take it in stride. Little did he know but her reasoning had been a bunch of wild guesses based on almost nothing.

"I-I guess our names suit us now," he said, laughing uneasily. He woke up Glimmer, Adora, and Catra. She let each of them walk into her ship, although she found the huge sword on Adora's back alarming. She let it go for now, but saw it as a possible threat. The last one she led to her ship was the woman that Bow had described as his girlfriend. Inside the ship, he didn't see her nearby, which worried him. Adora reassured him it would be fine.

As Glimmer followed her back to the ship, light filtered through her hair, and she smiled. "Thank you, miss, for saving us." It was at moment, something in Sana clicked. Just as she had been drawn to Chelli all those years ago in the academy, really liking a *bad girl*, something about this woman drew her in. She even began to blush, a bit, catching herself over her words. What in the world was going on?

Shaking her head, Sana did what she could to get back in the game. She couldn't let an alluring girl distract her, *not again*. Before she activated the thrusters and had the ship depart from the planet altogether, she turned toward Adora menacingly. She couldn't let that girl have that damn sword. She didn't trust people with huge weapons. What if she used it to take over the entire ship?

"Miss...uh...Adora. Can you hand over your sword?...I want to make sure there's *no funny business* going on."

Adora was a bit uncomfortable with this suggestion. She did not want to give her weapon to a stranger. After all, Catra had stolen it from her and used it to open a portal which *almost destroyed* the entire world. Earlier at Princess Prom, it had been stolen with Scorpia who taunted Bow with it. She was about to reject Sana's request. Out of nowhere, Catra jumped in, almost speaking for Adora. "My girlfriend needs her sword. Don't you *dare* take it away."

Sana rolled her eyes. What was it today with all these romantic partners? Yikes. She wasn't a big fan of people openly flaunting their relationships since because she wasn't in one herself. It made her a little jealous. In an effort to reduce tensions, Adora transformed her sword into a bracelet. Sana saw a flash of light and the sword disappearing. She not know where it went. She assumed that it had been put away *somehow*, although she didn't care about it at this point. The planet was unsafe. They had to leave. She had to get them somewhere so she could drop them somewhere and get rid of them. In this way, she shared a character trait with Chelli, although she would never admit it.

After all of them fit into the tiny ship, she closed the ramp and sat in the captain's seat. The blond-haired girl smushed next to her, as the ship engines hummed and thrusters engaged. Soon enough, the craft started traveling through the atmosphere. "What does this do?" she asked, while Sana urged her to not touch anything. Of course, she didn't listen. She pressed a big red button which released a missile, obliterating the entire battlefield in one blast, sending shards of metal flying. Sana was furious. She could only guess who had left them there: Chelli. She was starting to realize why she had done so. They could be so damn *annoying*!

Rather than admonishing her, Sana pulled a lever, suddenly sending the ship into hyperspace without warning, throwing Adora back onto the wall and causing her to be dizzy, then lose consciousness. She almost chuckled at the sweet revenge. When Bow, Glimmer, and Catra looked at her funny, she pulled out her pistol, setting it to the "stun" setting, and fired it all of them, causing them to slump. It would be an easier journey if they weren't awake.

On another side of the galaxy, Apta and Chelli were continuing their hyperspace travel. They debated what they should do with Rouge, who they hadn't originally planned on bringing with them. Apta had an idea.

"Can't we just release her in an escape pod?...I mean she would still survive, *right*?"

Chelli considered that. It seemed like the only way to get her somewhere away from them, in hopes that they wouldn't come across her again in the future. She worked with Apta to stuff Rouge into an escape pod. The plan was to release the pod when they reached Earth's orbit, then it could land somewhere safely on the planet below. Like everything in this journey, not everything went as planned. A wave rippled across the plain of space-time and passed through their ship. Somehow, this disturbance caused the module to be dislodged, releasing it from the ship.

Apta told her the sobering news. "Chelli, something happened to the escape pod… it's not attached to the *Darla Angel* anymore...I'm worried about Rouge." Chelli shook her head. Recovering something while traveling through hyperspace was almost impossible. She attempted to do so, using the controls, but the module was too far gone. She couldn't even see it on the scopes.

This wasn't the way she wanted this to go. It was supposed to be *different*. Her decisions continued to haunt her. She was about to lose it when Apta put her arms around Chelli in a loving embrace. She was okay now. She hugged Apta back. They remained together like this, for a while, until they arrived in Earth's orbit. Seeing all the satellites nearby, Apta went ahead and activated a specific feature so their ship would be invisible to all sensors, allowing them to approach undetected. However, this was almost worthless. Human detection equipment was so primitive that their ship wouldn't have been spotted on existing radar systems.

Prior to their descent through Earth's atmosphere, an indicator light began flashing. There was a loud pinging sound. The escape pod, with Rouge inside, had been located. Apta happily reported the news. "We found Rouge, Chelli! Our instruments say the vessel is near a planet called Earth Mach II." Chelli was relieved. She felt a bit better now. Knowing how sturdy the pod was, she was confident that Rouge had survived.

"Apta, thanks for telling me. Let us begin our descent." Apta saluted her. "Aye, aye captain!" she said. They both laughed about it as Apta accelerated them toward the planet. The *Darla Angel* moved at an incredible speed.

Meanwhile, the escape pod with Rouge, was somehow pulled into Earth Mach II's gravitational pull. It soon began tumbling through the atmosphere. The pod moved so quickly that not even radar picked it up. In fact, technicians thought it was an error with their systems. The pod slammed right into a glass elevator coming out of a factory, obliterating it, and sending the two people, a young boy and an aging corporate executive, who did not want to be in the business anymore, seemingly to their deaths. That did not occur. Rouge suddenly woke up and saved the boy. The executive floated down the surface in his golden parachute, which Rouge rolled her eyes at. These damn corporate tycoons.

When they reached the ground, the boy remarked, "do you want to work in *my* chocolate factory?" Rouge shook her head. He was puzzled. She cackled, almost a little malevolently. "Oh no, this is *my* factory now and you both work for me." Not expecting this result, they cautiously pledged their loyalty to her. Some time later, when showing her how she could travel down the chocolate river, she acted like she was going to travel with them, then relented, while they remained on the boat by themselves. She sent up a beacon into the sky, an ability she somehow discovered. Out of nowhere, Cyan appeared in front of her.

Rouge was puzzled. Hadn't Cyan *died*? It did not make sense. Logic fell away when this fellow Nean said, with a smile on her face, "hello sister, it's great to see you again." Rouge hugged her against the advice of Naomi, who told her it might be a trap. Both Neans laughed together and Cyan discharged a blast, hitting the boat, which contained the young kid and corporate executive. It soon sunk. It was unclear if they had survived or not. Rouge didn't even bat an eye. She looked around and saw these strange orange-skinned people, apparently called "oompa lompas," and laughed. "You work for me, Rouge, and my sister, Cyan, now, not that other *human*." They bowed. "Yes, Ms. Rouge and Ms. Cyan. We live to serve you." In no time at all, Wonka Confectionery had ceased to exist. It had become Rouge & Cyan Sweets Incorporated. A new chocolate company had been born, possibly changing the course of world history.

Chelli and Apta knew none of this. If they had known, they would have been *happy* for Rouge, glad she had found a place that was all her own, even though the way she had taken control was pretty rotten. Clearly, she didn't care about the fate of that poor kid or the executive. As for the *Darla Angel*, it had landed somewhere in a grassy field, where no one would bother them. Soon thereafter, they heard an enticing sound: a woman was playing guitar and singing at the top of her lungs about love, heartbreak, and finding your true self. She was on a stage out with few onlookers either sitting on the ground or standing. Apta smiled. "We have definitely come to the right place, Chelli. You are right, this is *gonna be fun*." Chelli held her hand firmly and they walked across the field toward the stage, ready to meet this woman and continue their journey...

End Notes

The comparison of tattoos was inspired by some fanart I saw on Tumblr comparing the electro-tattoo of Entrapta (as a fanartist pictured) and the electro-tattoos on Aphra's arm. In order to make sure I depicted Sana correctly in this fic, I read pages 236-237 of Amy Ratcliffe's "Star Wars: Women of the Galaxy" (the most updated version), which called her savvy, efficient, and cutthroat, as a smuggler, who only works with the rebels on some occasions, while she has tangled and complex emotions for Aphra, with both eventually "heal[ing] old wounds and reform[ing] their bond." I also read the entry for Aphra on pages 76-79 which I noted an earlier end note of another fic in this series.

The song that Opera sings (and later Rouge) at some points in this fic is loosely based on Ado's "Chocolat Cadabra" song, which came out in 2024, and advertised chocolate made for Lotte Corporation, which had a subsidiary named Lotte Confectionery from 1967 to 2023 (then renamed Lotte Wellfood). The page entitled "Opera" on the Metallic Rouge Wiki was immensely helpful for this fic as were the YouTube videos entitled "Metal Rouge VS Cylinder Head ~ Metallic Rouge 「AMV 」- Modest," "Weaponized Twintails | Metallic Rouge," and "Rouge VS Cylinder Head," among others. The line "So, I'm gonna say that you are good with bows and arrows, your girlfriend has some sort of magical powers, Adora is adorab-le, and Catra is a cat, right?…" is somewhat inspired by the third chapter of "The Sword at Her Hip," where Korra and Asami end up in Etheria but Korra doesn't have her Avatar powers (she can only transform into a seal).

The last part of this fic, concluding the story with Rouge, was a way I came up with, almost on the spot, to wrap up her story. I may continue her story, at some point, in its own fic in the future, as I noted in the beginning note, as this fic provides the set-up for such a story, if I decide to write it. Also, this fic sets the stage for part eight of this series which will bring in characters from Nana.

Works inspired by this one

Reunited Again?: Huntrix, the Best Friend Squad, Sana the Scoundrel, and Rumi's Daring Decision by lefemmerouge

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